

# Soviet Life, Through Conservative Glasses

## THE STRANGE WORLD OF IVAN IVANOV

By G. Warren Nutter

(World, 138 pp., \$5)

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Look into the strange world of G. Warren Nutter, an economist and specialist in Soviet affairs whose current position as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs lends a topical interest to his primer on "how life differs for the common man in the Soviet Union and the United States." Nutter, then teaching at the University of Virginia, worked the book up last year from a series of articles commissioned by the Philadelphia Inquirer. It is revealing.

On its front, the dust jacket describes *Ivan Ivanov* as a study of "the impact of government controls on the life of the average citizen in the Soviet Union that reveals a striking contrast between his rights and privileges" and those of an American. On the back it says the book is one of a series "designed to clarify the role of free enterprise in our society." The jacket adds that the series fills "the growing need for more information from accredited sources about the conservative point of view." Before you start congratulating the author or publisher for having the courage to declare his convictions, however, note that nowhere except on the dust jacket is that acknowledgment made. Personally, I am less inclined to congratulate than to note that the book is loaded.

Its value, as you step back one pace, is what the book inadvertently reveals about the conservative outlook in America. And since Nutter happens to be unusually well placed to translate the conservative outlook into national policy, this is no small thing.

He begins with "The Bulwarks of Liberty," a chapter discussing accurately and fairly the persecution of the writers Sinyavsky and Daniel. Their fate he contrasts with the liberty available in America: "No person in the United States need fear imprisonment for expression of his political beliefs." But is this so? The whole argument over the draft-card burners and the Chicago demonstrators and the critics of Judge Pugh is whether the state is arbitrarily classifying their politi-

cal expressions as criminal acts and prosecuting them on that formal basis.

Nutter is a man who can praise the small size of the American farm labor force without being disturbed by the fantastic social problems following in the train of rural migration to the cities. In his fervor to demonstrate the innate inferiority of the Soviet system, he can screen out all the agony of race and poverty from American life and he can write, "Our country was settled by migrants from a great variety of cultures and nations, many seeking a haven from oppression."

Reading of Nutter's dismay at the growth of Government in the United States and of its incursions into individual freedom and of its expanding grasp on the Nation's economic resources, one wonders why such an outspoken free-enterpriser should choose to become a part of that Government, and of the very branch that makes the deepest incursions into individual freedom and that has the fattest grasp on the Nation's resources. Why did Warren Nutter cross over?

The answer presumably is to be found, in this book, in the last chapter, entitled "War and Peace." Nutter quotes one of Lenin's grimmest us-or-them statements: (A series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and bourgeois states will be inevitable). Nutter explains that by bourgeois, Lenin meant "nothing more than countries that would resist Soviet domination. This motif . . . has served as the constant guide for [Soviet] foreign policy . . . the most recent form of this policy has taken on the name of 'peaceful coexistence,' which has nothing to do with either peace or accommodation of military

strategy to the cold facts of power in the modern world."

What is wrong with this? Simply that it assigns unchanging and unquestioned motives to Soviet policy, ignoring other possible motives such as fear, stupidity, confusion or pride; that it ignores the American contributions to world disorder and therefore deters efforts to appreciate and limit these, and that it encourages in the United States and evokes in the Soviet Union a magnification and ideologization of every possible bone of contention between them.